

8201 Oakleigh Road  
Baltimore, MD 21234  
October 18, 1987

Dear Mom and Dad,

I tried to call you this afternoon and evening but I guess you had gone out somewhere. This was the weekend we had expected guests but they both fell through. I believe I told you the Sanchez's couldn't make it because Jim is in Brussels looking for a place for them to live should they decide to make the move. Then last week Joyce Wilson called and said there was an illness in her family so they couldn't come either. While it would have been fun to have them, the cancelation wasn't any disappointment since we very much enjoy our weekends at home.

Our weather has been beautiful for several days with cool nights and warm days. The leaves have turned and are beautifully colored when the sun shines upon them. Last Wednesday and Thursday I drove down to the Ramada Inn near Dulles Airport to attend a conference on Ada (a programming language) and Artificial Intelligence. There were several interesting papers but the most excitement was generated on Thursday morning when the Redskins arrived to vote on ending their strike (Dad knows more about this than I!). Wednesday evening I drove down to Crystal City and did a 10 mile run across Memorial Bridge to the Tidal Basin. It was a great time to be out with the sun getting low and reflecting on the water. On Friday Vickie was in Washington for her first Smithsonian class on Beethoven's symphonies.

We got your card and I was glad to be reminded about the Octoberfest. You certainly keep good notes! I looked up my calendar and I had only recorded the towns we visited. I'm looking forward to another trip with you.

The next few weeks we will be busy. I'm going to another conference in Washington next Wednesday and Thursday. And, as I told you, we're going to Boston November 1-6. The Maryland Marathon is November 22 and the course goes very near our house. I ran 21 miles this morning and felt fine so I am ready for the Marathon as long as it isn't too cold or raining.

This is the time of year people are rated at Martin Marietta. Everyone in the same pay grade is positioned on a "totem pole" so that they are serially ranked from lowest to highest. I have to represent the people working for me at meetings and try to get them as high on the totem pole as possible. Position on the totem pole is directly proportional to pay raise. My boss will, of course, have to represent me at a meeting. I told him that while Martin Marietta is ranking me I am also evaluating them so we had both better watch out! (Vickie says she is happy not to have to climb the totem pole. This is the only place I ever heard of where there is literally a "low

man on the totem pole").

The articles on Mike were very interesting and we will be anxious to hear what their decision is. Perhaps he should run for President, considering the alternatives.

Rosa Ponselle's belongings were auctioned off from the front lawn of her estate this weekend.

Siegfried is doing fine although he isn't quite as frantic as formerly. He slipped out the door when I came home one evening and quickly ran behind the bushes near the house. They are very dense and impossible to get behind. I changed my clothes to go after him but when we went outside Vickie spotting him in the small tree in the front yard. He was happy to have me bring him back into the house. I think he was frightened by the rabbit which lives next to the house. The cat spends a lot of time during the day looking out the window but still likes to play hide and seek upstairs. Yogurt is his favorite food.

Love,

Jim